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RUEHCH/AMEMBASSY CHISINAU 0122  
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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NL](#) [UZ](#) [MD](#) [ZI](#) [BO](#)  
SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/GAERC: PUSHING HUMAN RIGHTS AGENDA

REF: A. SECSTATE 108064  
[1](#)B. THE HAGUE 851

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE PROTECT ACCORDINGLY.

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: The Dutch will push human rights during the October 13-14 GAERC discussions on Uzbekistan, Belarus, and Zimbabwe, and a deliberate approach to reviewing Moldova's relations with the EU. The Dutch are blocking consensus on Uzbekistan. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Poloff shared reftel A points with key MFA contacts. Regarding Uzbekistan, Deputy EU Correspondent Rochus Pronk briefed allied, non-EU diplomats on October 8 concerning the Dutch position. The EU presidency reportedly had hoped for consensus to lift sanctions. However, the Dutch are the only country to disagree. FM Verhagen wants a discussion of the situation in Uzbekistan, which has not lived up to the April benchmarks on releasing human rights defenders, supporting press freedom, and lifting NGO restrictions. The Dutch want to at least maintain the EU weapons embargo. The Dutch expect to "reluctantly agree" to ending visa restrictions.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Regarding Belarus, Pronk said FM Verhagen "sees no reason for a substantial change in policy." Others agree with the Dutch position, but the proposal by some in the EU to lift visa restrictions and invite the FM to Brussels "is going too fast." The Dutch are "open to discussing small steps," but want to see the West engage with opposition parties in Belarus.

[1](#)4. (SBU) In Zimbabwe, the Dutch are disappointed with the lack of progress. Pronk said the EU had almost agreed on conclusions for the GAERC, and that aid to Zimbabwe should be addressed once the coalition agreement is implemented. The Dutch believe the UN should be "more in the foreground" in resolving the current situation.

[1](#)5. (SBU) Regarding Moldova, the EU has agreed to a set of conclusions for the GAERC, and there will be no offer of EU membership. Some members want to speed up negotiations, but the Dutch see a "long road ahead" for Moldova to make progress on reforms.  
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